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INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 6991  
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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT  
FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 2006

#### In Today's Papers

Iraqi Sunni Leaders Expected to Visit Turkey  
Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Vatan, Cumhuriyet, Radikal, Zaman and others: Leaders of Iraq's Sunni and Kurdish parties asked the Shiite alliance to reconsider their nomination of Ibrahim Jafari as prime minister for the new government. His meetings in Turkey did not help Jafari strengthen his positions at home, papers comment. Turkey's special envoy to Iraq Oguz Celikkol said that during his recent trip to Iraq, he met with the representatives of all political groups, and that President Talabani welcomed the talks. Turkey stands at an equal distance to all Iraqi groups, Celikkol said, adding that the formation of a national unity government was important. Hurriyet says during his meeting with PM Erdogan in Ankara, Jafari reportedly said the US has failed, and only Turkey could help in establishing peace in Iraq. Jafari also asked Erdogan to open a new border crossing from Turkey into Iraq. The visit to Turkey of the radical Iraqi Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr has been postponed, according to Turkish Foreign Ministry sources. Sunni leaders National Dialogue Council leader Salih Mutlak and Iraqi Islamic Party leader Tariq al-Hashimi are expected to visit Turkey soon. Zaman reports Turkish Religious Directorate (Diyanet) head, Professor Ali Bardakoglu will visit Iraq soon in an effort to mediate between the Sunni and Shiite groups to end the sectarian violence. Bardakoglu will be accompanied by Kyrgyz, Kazakh and Azeri clerics on his Iraq trip.

Commenting on the future of Iraq in the liberal intellectual Radikal, Erdal Guven says that it is "too early to talk about a sectarian war or a civil war in Iraq." He warns, however, that although "Iraq is not yet on the verge of an abyss," it is "open to provocations until political stability is established."

Gul and Svoboda Deny Reports on Gul's Iran Remarks  
Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Cumhuriyet, Radikal, Zaman and others: The Czech Foreign Minister Cyril Svoboda denied a UPI report claiming Foreign Minister Gul told him that Iran's domination of the Middle East and the export of the Iranian Islamic revolution to Turkey would be inevitable if US troops pull out of Iraq. The Czech Foreign Ministry said in statement on Thursday that Svoboda's words at the Chatham House Conference had been misinterpreted. The statement said Gul had mentioned that a premature US withdrawal before the Iraqi regime takes control of the security would create a power vacuum. UPI had reported Svoboda as saying at the conference in London that Minister Gul would not make his Iran remarks public due to domestic political concerns. However, Chatham House spokesman and UPI correspondent Hannah Strange said other journalists had also heard the words of the Czech minister.

CIA to Help Turkey Capture Missing Terrorist  
Sabah: A Turkish security official said Turks had asked Robert Mueller and Porter Goss for help in the extradition of the leftist militant Fehriye Erdal from Belgium during the visits of the FBI and CIA directors to Ankara. The CIA is now seeking Erdal who disappeared earlier this week after receiving a four year prison sentence from a Belgian court for crimes committed in Belgium. She is wanted in Turkey for her role in the killing of prominent Turkish businessman Ozdemir Sabanci.

President Bush Visits India  
All Papers: The United States and India signed a landmark agreement to share nuclear reactors, fuel and expertise,

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papers and TV news shows report. Cumhuriyet and Radikal comment President Bush showed a "double standard" in supporting India against China while opposing Iran's nuclear program. Some 15,000 demonstrators protested against President Bush in New Delhi. On Thursday, before Bush begins a visit to Pakistan, an American diplomat and three others were killed in a bombing near the US Consulate in Karachi.

Sami Kohen writing in mainstream Milliyet notes that it interesting that the US has reached agreement with India but that "on the other hand, is doing its best to prevent Iran from developing its nuclear program." He explains that while this may appear to be a conflict, "there are two reasons for this double-faceted policy: the global interests of big powers and the behavior of the countries with nuclear programs." Kohen concludes, "Washington attaches value to India's leadership ability and its democratic regime. In other words, India and Iran represent two different models."

TV Highlights  
NTV (7 a.m.)

Domestic News  
- National Dialogue Council leader Salih Mutlak and Iraqi Islamic Party leader Tariq al-Hashimi are expected to visit Turkey soon.

- One soldier killed and three others injured in a PKK attack on a military vehicle in Cizre.

- Radio and Television High Board (RTUK) president Zahit Akman said four private TV channels will begin Kurdish language broadcasts this month.

International News  
- Secretary Rumsfeld said in a speech yesterday that during the Cold War, US support for Greece, Turkey and South Korea saved the three countries from communist takeover. Rumsfeld called for patience on the war against terror, recalling

that Communism had collapsed 40 years later following President Truman's exit from office.

- Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas met with the Israeli Labor party nominee for PM, Amir Peretz, in the first high-level talks between the two sides since Hamas won elections.
- Iraqi Sunnis and Kurds pressure Iraq's ruling Shiite Alliance to reconsider its nomination of Ibrahim Jafari as PM.

#### Economy News

- Turkish Union of Chambers (TOBB) chairman Rifat Hisarciklioglu said some cabinet ministers, influenced by bureaucrats who oppose a free market economy, object to the government's anti-inflation program.
- The Council of Ministers meeting on Monday is expected to pull down taxes for textile producers in Turkey.

WILSON